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PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS IN WEST AFRICA

By

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Preface

As you may find out, the “peacekeeping operations” in West Africa is nothing new, compared to other peacekeeping operations, but the only thing new is that the Economic Community of Western African States (ECOWAS) performs this risky task, through the Economic Community of Western African States Monitoring Group (ECOMOG). This challenge needed to be taken since the UN faces a lot of difficulties to gather troops for such operations, specifically if it is to go into African theaters. Numerous lessons have been learned after these first experiences in Liberia and Sierra-Leone. My intent is to share these lessons with you.

I would like to thank my Research adviser and former instructor Brenda Roth for her constant support, her comprehensiveness and her patience. I extend these thanks to the librarians for their valuable help and assistance.

I don’t forget my daughter Isabelle and my son Wilfried for their deep concern upon this study.

Lastly, I do appreciate my wife’s support back in Africa and her patience for waiting so long.

Abstract

West Africa has one of the most efficient regional organizations on the continent. The Economic Community of Western African States or ECOWAS includes 16 countries that speak English, French and Portuguese. This language diversity seems to be a handicap for the unity of this area of Africa. However, these language differences related to the colonial history, West Africa did organize its peacekeeping operations to guarantee the security of the people of Liberia and later on, restore the regime of the democratically elected president, Ahmad Tejan Kabbah, of Sierra-Leone on 10 March 1998.

The aim of this study is to show how West Africa solved the security problem despite some scarcities regarding logistics and financial resources. Some political problems did evolve because of cultural differences between its members and also the existing alliances between some of them and the warring factions. The major lesson learned is that these operations can be successfully conducted provided the countries have the will to do it and then put together their assets and focus on the high interest of this region rather than on their traditional rivalries.

The future of these operations seems to be bright and they will be more professionally conducted.

Part 1

INTRODUCTION

The purpose of the study of the peacekeeping operations in West Africa is to find out if West African countries can themselves fulfill all the resources required (manpower, logistics and skills) for such tasks, without the assistance of the international community, especially the first Tier countries. It will not be easy but not impossible to do. A deep cooperation among all the states freed from emotion, pressure and pride will help achieve this task. West Africa has endured two major conflicts, one in Liberia from December 1989 to August 1997 that led to death of President Samuel K. Doe, a lot of killing and the spread of thousands of refugees in neighboring countries; the second, in Sierra-Leone started in March 1991 by the fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) attempted to overthrow the government that failed, but gave birth to a serious crisis that is still underway.

This study encompasses six parts. In the first, it gives the definition of the concept “peacekeeping operations.” In the second, it elaborates on the history of these operations in West Africa and in the third it shows the political and social impact of these operations. The fourth part is devoted to the major difficulties encountered in the implementation of these operations in West Africa. The fifth part presents all the financial and military capabilities of western African countries to perform this task. Finally, the sixth part focuses on the future of these operations in West Africa.

Part 2

DEFINITION OF “PEACEKEEPING OPERATIONS”

Peacekeeping Operations are operations involving military personnel, but without enforcement powers, undertaken by the UN to help maintain or restore international peace and security in areas of conflicts. These operations are voluntary and are based on consent and cooperation. While they involve the use of military personnel, they achieve their objectives not by the force of arms, contrasting them with the enforcement action of the United Nations. They are indeed created with the approval of the belligerents. The states or factions concerned must accept the recommendation of the Security Council under chapter VI. Similarly, peacekeeping forces that are designed to facilitate a cease-fire or a more general peaceful settlement are consented to by the former warring parties. This is the traditional definition of “peacekeeping operations” which means the “separation of fighters to keep peace, or to create a cease-fire that can be respected by all parties. UN peacekeeping operations may involve the institution of observer units or armed forces units. The UN charter allows the deployment of UN peacekeeping forces, but weapons may only be used in self-defense¹. Regarding these operations in West Africa, the definition is far different. They actually take into account both observation and enforcement. It is known that “observation has the linked function of reporting on the state of hostilities”². Observers are military personnel not armed and not supposed to use arms even in self-defense. Enforcement on the other hand is much different. Military enforcement action is

essentially a coercive action taken against the will of the state or the faction. The aim is to force compliance with the decisions of the Security Council / ECOWAS, for instance to repel an aggression or to prevent human rights abuses. Enforcement is covered by chapter VII, especially its article 39 that provides that the Security Council can utilize the economic and military enforcement of chapter VII after determining that there has been a threat to the peace, breach of the peace or an act of aggression. After this clarification about this controversial phrase, let's move on to the history of these operations in West Africa.

Part 3

History of Peacekeeping Operations in West Africa.



Figure 1. Map of Africa

The peacekeeping operations in that area started with the Liberian crisis and continued with the crisis in Sierra-Leone. The ECOWAS and later on the UN, were involved but on some very

different scales. Let's have a short background of these two crises before focusing on the actual peacekeeping operations performed there.

The Liberian Crisis

The involvement of ECOWAS (ECOMOG)

Late December 1989, the current Liberian President, Charles Taylor, as the chief of the Movement, the National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL), conducted an insurgency against the government of the then president Samuel K. Doe. That resulted in a huge bloodshed. There were a lot of atrocities on the part of both factions involved in this crisis: The NPFL of Charles Taylor, the AFL of former president Samuel Doe, and the INPFL of Prince Johnson. Thus the 15 other countries of the ECOWAS signed an agreement of mutual assistance for defense in Freetown (Sierra-Leone) in 1990. A mediation committee was then appointed in Banjul (Gambia) which was charged to organize a peacekeeping force to respond to this critical situation. This force was called ECOMOG or the ECOWAS cease-fire Monitoring Group. Precisely designed on 6 and 7 August 1990 in Banjul, it reached 3,000 troops that were deployed by ship from Freetown to Monrovia (the Liberian capital). That started the peacekeeping operations history in West Africa. Later on, this expanded to reach 17,500 troops with 75% from Nigeria and the remainder from Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Senegal, Gambia and Sierra-Leone. The “mandate” of this was not clearly defined and stated broadly the following actions:

- The agreement of a cease-fire between the different factions
- To monitor the cease-fire
- The settlement of a widely represented interim government in which all Liberians would take part

- To hold general and presidential elections within 12 months
- To monitor the elections

On the field ECOMOG's troops did run into a lot of challenging tasks consisting initially in observation and reaching a very thorough enforcement level. Thus they did encamp the Armed Forces of Liberia in their barracks, they threw the National Patriotic Front of Liberia out of Monrovia and finally they confined the Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia to the Cadwell camp in Monrovia. In addition to these warfighting tasks, they helped install the Interim Government of National Unity and protected it during its term. In 1997 they helped organize the presidential elections that put in power the Liberian current president, Charles Taylor.

The UN role

Regarding the UN role in this crisis, on September 22, 1993, the UN Security Council created the Observer Mission in Liberia called UNOMIL by Resolution 866 in order to set up the effort of an advanced effort group. The UNOMIL Headquarters was represented in Monrovia and in four other different locations throughout the country (East, North, West and greater Monrovia). It was composed of 303 military observers, 20 medical personnel, 45 military engineers, 58 UN volunteers, 89 international personnel and 136 local staff. The military task of UNOMIL was the monitoring and verifying of the compliance with the cease-fire and the embargo on delivery of arms and military equipment. It was also in charge of the verification of the encampment, the disarmament and the demobilization of the factions, any violation of the agreement including the aspects of international human law and the training of outside personnel. Additionally, it is in charge of the evaluation of the financial requirements for the demobilization of the different clans. Concerning the civilian body, it is responsible of providing humanitarian and electoral assistance, the supervision of the entire electoral process that includes

the registration, the vote and the final results. There was quite a good cooperation between ECOWAS and UNOMIL.

The Sierra-Leone Crisis

This crisis started in March 1991 when fighters of the Revolutionary United Front (RUF) launched a war from the East of the country near the border with Liberia to overthrow the government, but they failed due to a serious resistance on the part of Sierra-Leonean armed forces. The following year, these armed forces overthrew the government but the RUF kept making attacks despite this change. This means they were not in cooperation with the new military leaders and instability remained in the country.

The ECOMOG involvement

ECOMOG did support the Sierra-Leonean armed forces to resist against the RUF attempt to overthrow the government in 1991. It also helped for the settlement to the conflict and the return of the country to civilian rule that occurred in 1996. As a matter of fact, parliamentary and presidential elections were held in February 1996 and Alhaji Dr. Ahmed Tejan Kabbah was put to power as the Head of state. The RUF again, since they did not participate to the elections, did not recognize the results and the conflict still continued and that led to a peace agreement between it and the government in November 1996, the “Abidjan Accord”(Cote d’Ivoire). This accord was derailed by another military coup d’etat in May 1997. This time, the armed forces and the RUF joined forces and formed a ruling junta. President Kabbah and his government went into exile in neighboring Guinea. Numerous attempts on the part of the international community to persuade the junta to step down failed. Later in October 1997, as the result of an oil and

embargo imposed to the junta, they signed a peace plan with the government-in-exile, whose aim was to be monitored by ECOMOG, but this agreement was never implemented.

In February 1998, ECOMOG, responding to an attack by rebel/military junta forces, launched a military attack that led to the collapse of the junta and its expulsion from Freetown. On 10 March 1998, ECOMOG reinstalled President Kabbah in his office but the fighting remained under way since the rebel alliance did not give up and gained control of more than half the country. In December 1999, this alliance began an offensive to retake Freetown that they actually overran almost entirely in January 2000. Recently, ECOMOG retook the city again and installed the civilian government. ECOMOG was really active in Sierra-Leone. So was the UN.

UN role in Sierra-Leone crisis

Actual actions on the field

The United Nations secretary-general appointed a Special Envoy in February 1995, Mr. Berhanu, who worked in collaboration with the Organization of African Unity (OAU) and ECOWAS in order to negotiate a settlement to the conflict under way after the 1992 military coup and the return of the regime to the civilian rule. Mr. Dinka, the new Envoy took also an active part to the “ Abidjan Accord” that was denied by another coup in 1997. Another Envoy, Mr. Francis G.Okelo, was sent to the country. He was among those who had tried to convince the junta to step down but failed. AS a result for that, the Security Council imposed an oil and arms embargo upon the country and the junta on 8 October 1997 and authorized ECOWAS to insure its implementation using ECOMOG troops. After the democratically elected president, Kabbah, regained his office on 10 March 1998, the Security Council terminated the oil and arms embargo and strengthened the office of the Special Envoy to include UN military liaison officers and

security advisory personnel. On June 1998, the Security Council established the United Nations Observer Mission in Sierra (UNOMSIL) for an initial period of six months. The Secretary General named Special Envoy, Okelo, as his Special Representative and Chief of Mission. He monitored and advised efforts to disarm combatants and restructure the nation's security forces. Unarmed UNAMSIL teams, under the protection of ECOMOG, documented reports of on-going atrocities and human rights abuses committed against civilians. When the rebels lastly retook control of Freetown in January 2000, all UNOMSIL personnel except the Special Representative and the chief Military Observer who continued performing their duties there were evacuated. These duties consisted of maintaining close contact with all parties to the conflict and monitoring the situation. All parties to the conflict signed an agreement to end the hostilities and form a government of national unity. These parties also requested an expanded role for UNOMSIL and consequently, the UN Secretary Council authorized an increase in the number of military observers to 210. On 22 October 1999, the Secretary Council already authorized a new and much larger mission .to assist the Government and the parties in carrying out provisions of the Lome peace agreement.

The UNAMSIL mandate³.

According to Security Council resolution 1270 of 22 October 1999, UNAMSIL has the first following mandate:

- To cooperate with the Government of Sierra-Leone and the other parties to the Peace Agreement in the implementation of the Agreement.
- To assist the Government of Sierra-Leone in the implementation of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration plan.

- To that end, to establish a presence at key locations throughout the territory of Sierra-Leone, including at disarmament/reception centres and demobilization centres.
- To ensure the security and freedom of movement of United Nations personnel
- To monitor adherence to the cease-fire in accordance with the cease-fire agreement of 18 May 1999 (S/1999/585, annex) through the structures provided
- To encourage the parties to create confidence-building mechanisms and support they're functioning.
- To facilitate the delivery of humanitarian assistance.
- To support the operations of United Nations civilian officials, including the Special Representative of the secretary-general and his staff, human rights officers and civil affairs officers.
- To provide support, as requested, to the elections, which are to be held in accordance with the present constitution of Sierra-Leone.

According to Security Council resolution 1289 of 7 February 2000, the mandate has been revised to include the following tasks(acting under Chapter VII of the United Nations:

- To provide security at key locations and Government buildings, in particular in Freetown, important intersections and major airports, including Lungi airport (the most important of the country).
- To facilitate the free flow of people, goods and humanitarian assistance along specified thoroughfares.
- To provide security in and at all sites of the disarmament, demobilization and reintegration program.

- To coordinate with and assist, the Sierra Leone law enforcement authorities in the discharge of their responsibilities.
- To guard weapons, ammunition and other military equipment collected from ex-combatants and to assist in their subsequent disposal or destruction.

After this heavy focus on the history of the peacekeeping operations in West Africa, let's have an emphasis on the political and social impact of these operations.

Notes

¹see <http://www.un.org/Depts/dpko/UNAmSI/M.htm> related to Security Council resolutions 1270 of 22 October 1999 and 1289 of 7 February 2000.

Part 4

Political And Social Impact Of The Peacekeeping Operations In West Africa

Political Impact

The first very political impact shown is the divide or difference of views between Anglophone counties led by Nigeria and Francophone countries led by Cote d'Ivoire. The second impact is the "police role" played by big Nigeria in West Africa.

Divide Between Anglophone and Francophone Countries

It appeared clearly that anglophone and francophone countries did not share the idea of the intervention of ECOMOG in Liberia equally. While the first wanted to intervene, the latter was opposed. Many reasons can be found for that concern. First of all, Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire, the "vieux" or "sage"(old man, wise man), as he preferred to be called, has a leverage role within francophone West African countries and he can easily convince his colleagues on an issue. Thus he surely did convince his counterparts of Togo, Mali, Senegal and Burkina-Faso because his deep wish was the victory of Charles Taylor. The reasons for that could be found back in the history of Cote d'Ivoire- Liberia relationships. There are some moral ones. As a matter of fact, Houphouet-Boigny was friendly tied to the former Presidents of Liberia (Tubman and Tolbert). Especially, Houphouet and Tolbert, whom Doe, the then Liberian president, killed, were in-laws and President Compaore of Burkina is Houphouet-Boigny's son-in-law. It follows

that revenge may have been the motive.¹ Thus, Cote d'Ivoire and Burkina-Faso "were actively opposed to ECOMOG. President Compaore was the most vehement critic of ECOMOG; he made no secret of his intention to continue supporting the NPFL. Most observers assumed that the Burkinabe leader expressed aloud the policy that his relative-by-marriage, Felix Houphouet-Boigny was pursuing less frankly. Many speculated that the Ivorian president sought the overthrow of Doe for his brutal seizure of power in 1980 (president Tolbert and his son, who was married to Houphouet-boigny's niece, were both murdered during Doe's coup). Indeed Taylor launched his insurgency across the Ivorian border in December 1989 and continued to receive supplies across that porous frontier after the dispatch of ECOMOG"²

This statement seems absolutely true since Taylor was always in Cote d'Ivoire during the period of war and an officer from Gendarmerie (military police), Captain Goualy Tape was Taylor's bodyguard. Danane, a city near the Liberian border, was almost his Headquarters. When he came there, he was welcomed as a head of state and the Ivorian police and Gendarmerie were in charge of his security. His troops sometimes crossed the border and reached Danane heavily armed and they did not care about Cote d'Ivoire regulations. They actually acted like in their own country

Thus, because of this revenge, Houphouet-Boigny and his francophone counterparts and "followers, except Guinea, did not ECOMOG to intervene since their security would not be threatened by Taylor's victory. Additionally, their former master, France, was also behind this conduct. As a matter of fact, France 's interests in Liberia would be safe if Taylor took power. According to S. Byron Tarr,

" the 1990 cease-fire left three of Liberia's four seaports, including Buchanan, Liberia's most modern port, under NPFL control. The ports of Greenville and Harper primarily handled logs exports. With Ivorian forests fast depleting, French loggers found Liberian forests very attractive. The NPFL's control over timber

lands, rubber plantations, iron ore mine and the ports enabled it to critically involve French business in sustaining the impasse. Control over these facilities and resources enabled Taylor to enhance rogue trade with France. The conflict established French commercial interests in Liberia as never before.”³

Regarding the Anglophone group (Nigeria, Ghana, Gambia, Sierra-Leone) and the Francophone Guinea, they had different concerns. First of all and according to Yonny Kulendi, these countries “ mutually perceived the prospect of a rebel military victory in Liberia as a major threat to their national security and regime legitimacy”⁴. Thus, for the security-conscious and legitimacy-craving dictatorship within the sub-region, the insurgency represented a festering cancer, which they could not afford to leave unmanaged. Guinea was with these Anglophone counterparts because she was the only country to say no to France’s conditional offer of independence; she wanted independence not related to cooperation with France. Unlike her French counterparts, she was not going to safeguard French interests in Liberia. Additionally, these countries were followers to the “big brother,” Nigeria, who had some specific concerns regarding the Liberian crisis. According to Mortimer, “ President Babangida had cultivated friendly ties with Liberian dictator Samuel Doe. President Doe, for example, had seen to it that the University of Liberia bestowed an honorary degree upon the Nigerian leader, who in turn made a generous donation to what became the Babangida School of international Affairs. Nigeria played a major facilitating role in rescheduling 30 million dollars of Liberian debt with the African Development Bank and was reported to have supplied arms to the Doe regime”⁵

The Police Role of Nigeria

Since the Liberian crisis, Nigeria, in addition to her large population (the most populous in Africa) and her strong military and economic power, acts as the real “big brother” in that area. She was at the front line in the attempt to solve the Liberian problem and later, in Sierra-Leone during the crisis in this country. For example, among the ECOMOG troops that grew from 3,000

to 17,500, the largest number came from Nigeria; she effectively provided 75% of this force. All the commanders of ECOMOG were almost all-Nigerian citizens. Major General Joshua Dongoyaro was the first Nigerian commander of ECOMOG who replaced the Ghanaian General, Quainoo, discredited by the events leading to the death of President Doe. It was again the Nigerian-dominated ECOMOG that countered the Sierra-Leonese rebels and re-installed to Office the democratically elected president Kabbah in 1998.

Social Impact

First of all, the very interesting fact related to these operations as well as in Liberia and in Sierra –Leone, was this unfortunate opportunity for the West African forces from Nigeria, Ghana, Guinea, Sierra-Leone etc...to be able to work together on the same field. A lot of peacekeepers did learn another language since they had to communicate. Secondly, these peacekeeping operations had saved a great number of lives in Liberia and in Sierra-Leone. The bloodiest and ethnical war in Liberia had reached a level violence and savagery hard to believe in the 20th century. But actually, and according to Osisioma, “ on the social front, one has to mention the loss of thousands of lives in Liberia including lives of citizens of other West African nations. The problems of Liberian refugees are raging in several West African nations and range from providing them food, shelter, clothing, health care and employment to controlling increasing crime situations.”⁶ The very positive aspect of these operations as well as in Liberia and in Sierra-Leone, was the spirit of togetherness that emerged from the search for peace in Liberia and is a hope that this will lead to more good things to come in West Africa. The very last social impact of these peacekeeping operations was the organization of the presidential elections in Liberia and the restoration of democracy in Sierra-Leone. As the confidence-building measures highly appreciated by the international community, ECOMOG had

contributed to reduce the overall social malaise. The question sometimes raised is: What would happen if ECOMOG was not there? The good answer is: Each faction will have their turn at victory, and this war won't ever be over! Let's now focus on the difficulties encountered during these operations.

Notes

¹ . See Inegbedion, "ECOMOG in Comparative Perspective", pp.225-226.

² See Mortimer, pp 125

³ C. Byron, Taar, "Extra Africa Interests in Liberia Conflict, pp.165-166.

⁴ Yonny, Kulendi, "Security Cooperation in Africa: Lessons from ECOMOG".

⁵ See Montimer, "ECOMOG, Liberia and Regional Security in West Africa, pp.151.

⁶ See Osioma, B.C., Nwolise, "Liberian Crisis and ECOMOG", pp.70

Part 5

Difficulties Encountered

The very first difficulty was the lack of a clear mandate. There was a controversial debate around this very question because ECOWAS was created for the economic development, and social integration according to the article 2 (Aims of the community) of the Treaty of the Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS)¹. ECOMOG did not have a very unanimous support from the Nigeria-field command. There was also a lack of training for some troops along with a lack of discipline. There was a serious problem of logistics, each country having its own assets to work with.

The major difficulty was that the great percentage of force was from Nigeria. That was a sign of hegemony on the part of this country, especially in the decision-making process. Additionally, most of the CINCs were from Nigeria. Financially and logistically talking, Nigeria was the number one within ECOMOG. Financial difficulties were also significant. While UN peacekeepers were paid \$1000 per soldier per month, ECOMOG peacekeepers received \$100-150 per month.

There was a lack of uniform regional support at the beginning of these operations on the part of the member countries, due to the divide between francophone and anglophone countries, Houphouet-Boigny of Cote d'Ivoire being the serious handicap, because he had a great influence

over the U.N General Assembly for West Africa. The U.S and consequently the UN, did not either support ECOMOG's intervention initially due to the following reasons:

1. Liberia that was the key area to protect U.S interests and to counter the Soviets was no longer relevant after the cold war.
- 2.Regarding mining level, Liberian iron-ore was degraded and had no interest for the U.S.
- 3.The U.S producing synthetic rubber had abandoned the Firestone Company specializing in rubber production and ran by the U.S for more than 100 years.
4. France wanted to take over Liberia from where they had stopped (wood, iron-ore, diamond in the highlands of Nimba County etc...)

Despite these difficulties, ECOMOG performed this challenging task, but what are the financial and military assets of these countries?

Notes

¹ Lagos, Nigeria, 28 May 1975.

Part 6

FINANCIAL AND MILITARY CAPABILITIES of ECOWAS COUNTRIES

ECOWAS is composed of 16 countries that are Nigeria, Cote d'Ivoire, Senegal, Ghana, Guinea, Mali, Mauritania, Liberia, Sierra-Leone, Niger, Gambia, Togo, Guinea-Bissau, Cape Verde, Burkina-Faso and Benin. Regarding the financial and military capabilities of these countries, let's consider for this study three characteristics: The global GDP, the per capita GDP and the size of the overall armed forces. These are shown below in Table 1. Based on these current figures, let's set up an average of the GDP and the per capita GDP for the ECOWAS countries. For the armed forces, let's have the total size of all troops of these sixteen countries by simply adding these different figures. These figures show that if these counties put together all their assets even not important as compared to those of the First Tier countries, the task may be achievable. Additionally, in case of deployment, it will be in a single or only in two countries and this can also be affordable.

Table 1. ECOWAS Comparison

Country	GDP	Per capita GDP	Armed Forces
Nigeria	\$106.2 billion	\$960	77,000
Ghana	\$33.6 Billion	\$1,800	12,380
Mali	\$8 billion	\$790	14,150
Cote d'Ivoire	\$24.2 billion	\$1,680	17,000
Burkina-Faso	\$11.6 billion	\$1,000	11,000
Sierra-Leone	\$2.7billion	\$530	12,000
Mauritania	\$4.7 billion	\$1,890	15,650
Niger GDP	\$9.4 billion	\$970	10,700
Liberia	\$2.8 billion	\$1,000	5,000
Guinea	\$8.8 billion	\$1,190	9,700
Senegal	\$15.6 billion	GDP\$ 1,600	13,350
Guinea-Bissau	\$1.2 billion	\$1,000	11,250
Cap Verde	\$581 Million	\$1,450	1,100
Gambia	\$1.3 billion	\$1,000	900
Benin	\$7.6 billion	\$1,300	7,300
Togo	\$8.2 billion	\$1,670	6,950
ECOWAS Average	\$15.3 billion	\$1,240	225,430 total troops

These figures show that if these countries put together all their assets even not important if compared to those of the First Tier countries, the “task” may be achievable because of the unity

of effort and because of the “joint” concern and the synergy, all the costs would undoubtedly be low.. Additionally, if such cooperation were already set up, the occurrence of these crises would be very low. Economy is very important here because “money is the nerve of the war.”

Part 7

Future of Peacekeeping Operations in West Africa

Based on this experience of ECOMOG in Liberia and Sierra-Leone, it is quite sure that peacekeeping operations do have a bright future in West Africa provided some conditions be fulfilled. Firstly, the political will of ECOWAS countries is critical. Secondly, these countries have to provide their troops the basic needs for such operations, that include a neat budget, all the logistics required to perform the specific tasks related to these operations and a high level of training in order to possess all the necessary skills.

Political Will

Despite the traditional rivalry between francophone and anglophone countries in West Africa, there is a real political will to handle the security of this area. As a matter of fact, ECOMOG provides a rudimentary framework for the evolution of a conflict resolution mechanism. This seems most timely and appropriate, given the recommendations of the U.S government and its allies for the formation of an African Crises Response Force.¹ Additionally, the Organization of African Unity (OAU) is deeply concerned about the security problem in Africa. Thus, in July 1991, at the Abuja Assembly, Salim Ahmed Salim, the Secretary General, informed the Heads of states of his intention to restructure the Secretariat to make it more responsive to its mission, and specifically to conflict resolution². It is necessary in the furtherance of global security, that the international community assist West Africa to accomplish

appropriate levels of training, logistics and supplies necessary to execute humanitarian relief, peacekeeping and enforcement operations and other military operations other than war. This will reduce, if not eliminate, the frequency of the direct deployment of Western or U.S forces in Africa even under austerity. Enhanced training and capabilities will likely improve military professionalism and influence civil-military relations.³ Lastly, ECOWAS did have an early concern about this issue through its Protocols on Mutual Defense and Non-Aggression⁴.

Assets

Budget

This budget can be shaped by a relatively equal contribution of each member- country, each year, during “peace period”. But another special contribution can be made later in case of crisis that needs an intervention. It is true, in this area, the level of development is not the same from one country to another and it won’t be fair to impose the same fixed amount of money to every country. It would be fair to use a small percentage of each country’s budget. Thus, each member-country will contribute each year this amount. It will be a kind of fund raising to set up a budget for ECOWAS’ or West Africa’s peacekeeping operations. This fund raising can be extended to the United Nations, First-Tier Countries and also to non-governmental organizations. These peacekeeping operations did show that through the experience of troop contributing countries, funding their own participation without any financial or other support from the ECOWAS Secretariat. That brought into focus the need to contribute to ensure the financial viability of ECOWAS in order to ensure its capability to deal with future contingencies.

Logistics

With that budget, ECOWAS will purchase some basic materials for its tactical needs on the field. That will include communication, transportation, and command and control devices. Each country will use its own means to get to the theater, but once there, ECOWAS will provide them the basic means in order to partially preserve their own resources. This would strengthen and guarantee the efficiency of the troops on the field, knowing that some countries ran into lot of scarcities concerning logistics' level. ECOMOG's experience in Liberia had revealed a lot of inadequacies in communications, transportation, logistics and other equipment that all came to the fore and for sure, subsequent military assets may be better applied.

Based on what that was accomplished by ECOMOG despite this myriad of constraints and also restraints, it will be quite exact to assume that given a real political will and all the necessary assets, West Africans can both better manage and conduct more efficiently and more professionally the regional crises which are likely to occur in the future.

Notes

¹ "To foster regional stability and peace in Africa, the United States in 1996 launched the African Crisis Response Initiative (ACRI) to work with Africans to enhance their capacity to conduct effective peacekeeping and humanitarian operations." (A NATIONAL SECURITY STRATEGY FOR A NEW CENTURY, pp.46, Dec. 1999)

² See OAU, Resolving Conflicts in Africa: Proposal for Action, (OAU press and Information Series, 1992).

³ See " Security Cooperation in Africa: Lessons From Ecomog" (Yunni, Kulendi, pp.98,1997)

⁴ ECOWAS Protocol on Mutual Defense, May 29, 1981and ECOWAS Protocol on Non-Aggression, Articles 2 : Member States declare and accept that any armed threat or aggression directed against any Member shall constitute a threat or aggression against the entire community. Article 3: Member States resolve to give mutual aid and assistance for defense against any armed threat or aggression.

Part 8

Conclusions

From this study related to “peacekeeping operations in West Africa”, a lot of lessons were learned and some recommendations seem likely to be addressed to the decision-making officials of West African countries.

Lessons Learned

Regarding the very lessons learned, let's focus first on the most important traits. These first peacekeeping operations in West Africa have clearly shown the strengths as well as the weaknesses of a sub-regional security cooperation. For this specific case, we have noticed a lot of problems in logistics, coordination and a lack of training on the part of a lot of troops of some country members of ECOMOG force. This leads undoubtedly to a lack of professionalism.

Secondly, ECOMOG raises two important question of how, in an instability-prone region such as West Africa, ECOWAS could contemplate the effective promotion of economic integration without reference to a regional security framework and also how a major peacekeeping operation could be conducted without the full leadership and control of the UN

Thirdly, because of some political problems due to old rivalries related to language and specific interests, these operations were almost to be jeopardized. Hopefully, diplomacy, compromise and the high concern for the regional had prevailed.

Lastly, this research explains the strategic mindset of West Africa leaders, in the context of the post Cold War security challenges that are likely to plague Africa and other parts of the world in the foreseeable future. Consequently, these insights may facilitate the understanding of security cooperation in Africa and elsewhere.

Recommendations

The first recommendation is the appeal for true cooperation between states; that includes freedom of trade and movement throughout the region.

Regarding peacekeeping, each country should now prepare if they haven't yet, to provide all the means to train their troops and to get the basic assets required for efficient peacekeeping operations.

ECOMOG should be considered as the genuine framework for a West African Crisis Response Capability.

It is time for each country to build a "joint mind", as well as economically, politically and socially. And this should to be based on a strong security foundation. They would put definitively aside, their pride, selfishness, self-sufficiency and the so-called "sovereignty" concept, that altogether are likely to remain an obstacle that will challenge the strategic insight of West African policymakers in all spheres of regional cooperation and, in particular, security cooperation.

West African people should show greater commitment to ECOWAS and ECOMOG. Concerning the overall Africa, a political willingness to solve African violence could be magnified with this type of commitment by the people.

There is in Cote d'Ivoire a peacekeeping School in Zambakro, near the political capital, Yamoussokro that waits for the training of West African peacekeepers. It is important that

countries of that area think to take advantage of this asset for the sake of more professional peacekeeping operations in the future!

Glossary

UN	United Nations
US	United States of America
ECOWAS	Economic Community of Western African States
ECOMOG	ECOWAS Monitoring Group
OAU	Organization of African Unity
NPFL	National Patriotic Front of Liberia
INPFL	Independent National Patriotic Front of Liberia.
AFL	Armed Forces of Liberia
UNOFIL	United Nations Observers Mission in Liberia.
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
UNAMSIL	United Nations Observers Mission in Sierra Leone
RUF	Revolutionary United Front

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